

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JULY 21, 2011
MINUTES

PRESENT: Diane Ripple, Ashley Frazier, Pamela Groh, Don Harris, Jim Pearson, Amy Baumann, Alyssa Schroeder (last meeting: got a new job as school social worker), Cathy Warmington, Ed Cohen, Missy Kueht-Becker, Sara Carpenter

STAFF PRESENT: Jesús Mireles, Pete Slesar, Antwayne Robertson, Mary Anderson, Kathy Mullooly

Diane Ripple called the meeting to order at 8:39 A.M.

Introductions were made as there were three visitors; Ashley Frazier from United Way, Pam Groh as a community observer who previously worked at HHS and for the last five years in Muskego Norway School District as a social worker, and Cathy Warmington of Wisconsin Community Services.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Don Harris motioned to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2011 meeting. The motion was seconded by Alyssa Schroeder and approved.

BOARD LIAISON REPORT

Joe Vitale was not present due to his attendance with the HHS Board for the 2012 budget review. Diane Ripple shared a note from Joe that indicated the budget is looking better this year, but is only a one-year reprieve. He will have more budget information coming. He alerted people to the possible closing of the juvenile center.

WISCONSIN COMMUNITY SERVICES

Cathy Warmington, with the Mediation Restorative Justice Center Program, introduced herself. She shared brochures. Cathy explained they began doing restitution cases with juvenile court 28 years ago. They are one of first to do restorative justice conferencing in Wisconsin. She has just written article with Judge Bohren, which is coming out soon. Over the years, they've received funding in various ways and developed different methods. They have about 30 volunteers from a variety of backgrounds who complete a two-day training. There is a \$250 charge for two-day training for community members. If you're an agency of United Way, there's a reduced fee.

They are in small claims once a week. They also refer large claims. Anyone can refer a case. Some people are self-referred. They mediate community problems, which can include kids bothering neighbors, snow problems, leaf problems, siblings, juvenile disputes, and bullying. Cathy wishes people would come in for mediation in bullying cases before they escalate. She related two bullying cases that should have been referred earlier. There's a belief by some that you shouldn't put a bully in a room with the person they are bullying. However, they have the

necessary experience to properly address these situations. If children are involved, parents are always encouraged to be involved. There is always a very positive response. Jesús asked if she's doing outreach to the schools so they are aware of this free service, especially since schools don't have resources to deal with these conflicts given current budget issues. Cathy answered that they do reach out to schools. She related a story about helping two gangs not getting along at one particular school to reach an agreement and work things out, and another story referred by the police liaison officer about senior girls worried they wouldn't graduate due to their fighting. She taught them how to talk to each other and all four graduated.

People are called to a higher responsibility in mediation. The process is made so they have to listen to the other person.

Other matters they mediate include landlord/tenant issues, workplace issues, and victim/offender conferencing through DHS (a special brochure on that was shared). Victim Offender conferencing is very successful with juveniles. It's a slower process. Many times victims don't want to see their offender. This is a little different kind of mediation. More care is taken and they help the healing process to move forward. All of the work on Victim Offender conferencing is done ahead, before they meet. She gave an example of a case of a family moving into the Brookfield area. There were a lot of boxes in the garage as they were moving into their new home. Some kids came by and stole boxes from the garage and many items from the house, ransacking the house. These juveniles met with the mother of the home. She asked them why, don't they like new neighbors, did her family do something to them, do they realize that she is now afraid to be home alone, they leave lights on all the time, and their daughter is afraid to sleep in her new bedroom. Kids don't think of the impacts on the victim, they just think of things. These are very effective meetings. Victims sometimes start out extremely angry, but by the time the mediation is over, many times they settle for less than full restitution because they see the other family. It forces juvenile offenders to look at their victims and the people they're harming.

Jesús asked if she collaborates with therapists involved with victims and how do they prepare for mediation? Cathy answered a lot of people they work with have counselors and they are willing to work with them. It's a helpful process and they want to get as much information and help for people to make it a positive experience. Also, it is a voluntary process; they're not going to push people who aren't ready.

Cathy reported on the Agree to Succeed Program, which is a free truancy and tardiness program. This involves getting together appropriate parties to figure out why the child is not going to school or is late all the time. Usually there is a transportation or financial problem with the family. It's not usually the child's fault. They get the family together and mediate with the school (counselors, school nurse, or whoever is appropriate). An action plan is developed between the school, family and child. They have done this from grades K – 12. The program is meant to be proactive to prevent truancy and tardiness, but they get a lot of referrals for long term problems. Some referrals come in the Spring when kids are at risk of not graduating. Cathy talked about kids who sometimes need a different atmosphere and described a boot camp. Some of the kids they work with are starting at a new school or transitioning from middle to high school. She has found school staff to be tremendous working with kids on this issue, and they

come up with great ideas. 82% of families that mediate in the program have improved attendance, and 81% have improved grades. The program is funded through the United Way, Helping Parents Helping Kids Succeed. Cathy talked about one of their staff, Megan's work, sometimes riding bus with kids afraid to ride, or visiting the home to say it's time to go to school. She offers incentives like Brewer's tickets or CD's. They get vouchers from Goodwill for kids who need clothes. One woman had car trouble and they found someone to donate parts and labor to repair her car. Various community resources are found after they figure out what the families needs.

Wisconsin Community Services is also involved in Teen Court. It's been doing well. They have a Facebook page, which includes the court schedule.

Mary Anderson asked if there's a fee for mediation like landlord/tenant. Cathy answered that there is a fee based on a sliding scale.

Cathy reported on the victim/offender conferencing with the youth panel program. Youth accountability panel meets monthly with a break in the summer. The offender has to come and listen to other victims and they have to write an apology and complete worksheets. Recidivism rate (delinquency following program participation) was 7.7%. Pete added this is a nationally recognized, very successful program. They use volunteers to work with the students. They are community people from all different backgrounds who like to work with kids.

Jesús stated with reduction in funding and budget challenges, we have to maximize the use of programs like this and services available to families. He suggested making sure families are aware of this program.

SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES

Kathy Mullooly stated they are half way through the year. There been a lot of change over in all agencies. Not only in administering the grant, but in the agencies. Getting on the same track and she'll be meeting soon with groups to see how their progressing. Safe and Stable funding has changed. United Way turned administration of the grant back to HHS due to something in their bylaws. Programs include Healthy Families, LSS (adoption), St. Charles Mentoring, Parents Place, and Supervised Visitation.

SPECIAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Missy and Jesús missed the last meeting in May. Jesús explained SSAC is a subcommittee of CAFSAC, but right now we don't send CAFSAC the minutes of the SSAC meetings. He asked the group if they want to receive the SSAC meeting minutes, as it would provide good information on the work they're doing. At their last meeting, they had an ARCH representative with a report on the cap on family care and its impact on children aging out of our system needing continuing adult services. They discussed the transition process. For the children's area, they plan short term until they're 18 years of age, and long term for the rest of their lives. Because of the wait list, they now need to service kids until age 22. Because of the cap, they're keeping kids longer and some kids have to wait longer. Two other issues discussed at the last

SSAC meeting were that on June 1 they worked with the State of Wisconsin and had a demonstration project in place for eligibility for the Katie Beckett Program – Wisconsin Medicaid, Community Option Program (COP), the Family Support Program (FSP), and Children's Long Term Support Program (CLTS) etc. As of June 1, all referrals for those services now go to CompassWisconsin-Threshold. This is one-stop shopping; clients can apply for five different programs at once. Clients apply on line and one person goes to the home, meets with the family, and makes a determination on all programs they're eligible for. It's working well so far. The last change is third party administration (TPA) for Children's Long Term Support Program. Wisconsin Physician Services (WPS) was awarded the contract by the State. They said all payments will go through WPS, as of August 1, 2011. Waukesha County will continue to provide services and all payments will go through WPS. There was discussion about the payment schedule and working with providers to deal with this transition. Pam asked about CompassWisconsin, and do people still call HHS? Jesús said no, they contact CompassWisconsin directly. Their contact information is included in the June minutes.

Jesús reported that Birth to 3 has ongoing challenges, working within limited funding. They are working to identify core Birth to 3 services and working with the State. They were looking at Birth to 3 waiver with the feds, but the new State secretary felt a different program would be more beneficial. The State is putting together an application and hope to have a Birth to 3 waiver program implemented by the end of this year.

Missy reported on a recent fundraiser, the Bravado, which was well attended. They had to cut off registration at 300 because of parking limits. It's a run ,bike, and canoeing event. She hopes to make their goal of raising \$10,000.

Don Harris motioned that minutes of the SSAC be included in the CAFSAC minutes. Diane read from the CAFSAC bylaws, which say minutes of committees can be shared to enhance communication. Julie will send SSAC minutes to Diane.

COLLABORATING AGENCIES

Missy reported that the purpose of this Excel workbook is to make agencies aware of programs and services available. It is a work in progress and the goal will be to keep it up to date. Jesús said there was to be a subcommittee to look at this to be sure there is collaboration between agencies, determine how to coordinate interventions and determine who does what. The purpose of the subcommittee was to establish how to work efficiently with families. It's something ultimately Joe Vitale can share with the HHS Board. The HHS Board is interested in hearing about agencies sharing and working together without duplication, but maintaining our individual expertise. Jesús asked Julie to send out the latest workbook for people to review and email their updates.

OTHER

Joe Vitale appeared briefly, taking time out of his HHS Board budget review meeting, to report that because of the budget repair bill, there is improvement with personnel costs that can be spread around, but it's a one-year fix. A big concern is the discussion on closing the juvenile

center. At what point in time does money not become the be all, end all? He doesn't know how far along this is.

Sarah Carpenter talked about what she has done. Pete Slesar talked about the process and the workgroup studying the juvenile center. Programmatic questions have been addressed. They have been supported with data, which reinforces concerns about the recommended changes. There was discussion on the impact of closing the juvenile center. Data was used to illustrate the emphasis on how the juvenile center is a piece of how to keep families together. Waukesha County has a low placement rate compared to other counties. Joe Vitale said his mantra continues to be intervention and prevention. He would like to see all the data gathered that shows that component.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Amy Baumann announced the PSC for Safe Babies and Healthy Families of Waukesha destination Hawaii trip raffle. Pregnancy Support Connection and Healthy Families intend to merge as of January 1, 2012.

Diane reported that there is a CAFSAC nominating committee meeting scheduled for July 28 to discuss potential new members. Names will be brought forward at the September meeting for consideration.

Pam Groh thanked the committee for forwarding the minutes and the foster care forum newsletter. She will put together what's important about this committee and how it can help her school district, and approach the Muskego Norway School district superintendant to ask to become a member of the committee. She would like to be nominated as a member.

Diane said they're looking at August 10 for a Joint Advisory Committee meeting.

The members wished Alyssa Schroeder good luck in her new position. Alyssa will pass on information about the CAFSAC committee to her replacement.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on September 15, 2011 in the Board Room of the Human Services Center.

ADJOURNMENT

Jim Pearson motioned to adjourn. Missy Kueht-Becker seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

Approved on: 9-15-11
Date